

## Commissioner's Weekly Wrap Up

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DCS Communications Office

**February 4, 2005**

### The Week Ahead

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**Wed., Feb. 9-Thu., Feb. 10** –The Commissioner attends the Family-to-Family Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C.

### Good News at Woodland Hills

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*Submitted By Kathy Y. Bell, Superintendent, Woodland Hills Youth Development Center*

I want to share some good news with the department and thank a few staff members for the opportunity. We all need to hear about the good things that are happening with our juvenile justice students in Davidson County. I know we get frustrated and a little sad when we think about all the newspaper articles and TV reports. My philosophy is not to question what we do, but question how we can improve what we do.

Now the good news ...

Ms. Gwen Harris worked very hard to develop a partnership with Gaylord Opryland Hotel and the department's Horizon program. We took three students for orientation on January 20. On January 26, they went back to finalize the outcome; two of the young men have gotten jobs and will start next week. This partnership is giving our young people an opportunity to become productive, crime-free, successful young adults.

Ms. Harris, thank you so much for your hard work and dedication to our children. I also want to thank Ms. Lillian Richmond, a teacher at Woodland Hills who took the initiative to spear head this endeavor. She has attended all of the meetings and made sure the students had appropriate clothes to wear to the interview. She has worked very hard in making sure things went smoothly and selected the students for review for the program. I want to thank my security staff, Cpl. Wright and Officer Williams for escorting the students to their interview with Ms. Richmond and Mr. Martin, who is the culinary arts teacher. I also want to thank Davidson County regional team leader, Anita Crutcher, for her help in securing the necessary documentation on the students who were hired.

Teamwork is a wonderful thing. One last anecdote: "Any day above ground is a good day." Think about it.

### Lunch and Learn Satellite Training

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*Submitted by William Haynes, Executive Director, Human Resources Development*

Beginning Friday, Feb. 11, we will offer a series of training seminars for Child Protective Services (CPS) case managers. The seminars will be offered via satellite during the mid-day. The first training session will focus on "Legal Issues Related to CPS" from noon-2 p.m. CST.

Please identify at least 5-8 CPS case managers to participate in this training. Those selected should be able to share what they have learned with others in the region. You may use your discretion in identifying participants. All names must be forwarded to Bettye Carter by your training coordinator no later than the close of business Monday, Feb. 7. The training is designed for CPS case managers and they should receive preference for attendance. However, this represents an excellent opportunity for other case managers to gain some familiarity with CPS.

Tentative dates for future training sessions are February 18, February 25, March 4, March 18, April 1, April 8, April 15 and April 22. Seminar topics and speakers will be announced within the next week. Potential topics include "Interviewing Children" and "Sexual Abuse."

We realize this is short notice, but it is important that we have at least 5 participants per region. Please have your training coordinators contact Bettye Carter for registration information. She will have the list of satellite locations, capacities and directions.

### **Taft Celebration Honors 605 Years of Service**

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*Submitted by Carol Muscarnero, Personnel Analyst 2, Taft Youth Development Center*

On Wednesday January 26, 2005, Taft Youth Development Center celebrated with employees of past and present to honor 605 years of dedicated service.

State Representative Eric Swafford, Bledsoe County Mayor Greg Ridley, Pikeville City Mayor Greg Johnson and Superintendent Larry Lively honored the employees reaching a milestone year and employees that retired during 2004.

Maxey Roberson was honored as having the most years of service at Taft, retiring after 43 years of service. He began working at Taft on March 1, 1961 and retired on March 31, 2004.



*Maxey Roberson accepts his certificate of recognition from Larry Lively.*

Others present included Betty Turner Idema (15 years), Rita Holloway (5 years), Ruby Walling (15 years), Laura Simmons (15 years), Dawn Disidoro (5 years), Kenny Rogers (15 years), Daryl Beard (15 years), Don Gifford (15 years), Danny Nale (15 years), Vince Pendergrass (10 years), Robert Denn (5 years), Ron Billingsley (5 years), Gregory Whitehead (5 years), Randy Smith (5 years), James Creason (15 years), Elizabeth Shuburg (20 years), Judy Roberts (25 years), Robert Worthington (30 years), Bruce Bayless (25 years), Don Murray (25 years), Mac Boyd (20 years), James Dodson (25 years), Lonnie Evans (25 years), Allan Hannah (25 years), Judy Bayless (30 years), Johnny Hale (29 years), Anna Bedwell (25 years), Maxey Roberson (43 years), James “Buddy” Fisher (27 years), Loretta Hale (26 years), Mike Oakes (23 years) and James Spears (12 years).

### **CSA Transfer Update**

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*Submitted by Randal M. Lea, Executive Assistant to the Commissioner, Blue Ribbon Team*

As most of you are aware, the work of the community services agencies (CSAs) is coming to DCS. I am assisting Debbie Waddell, the Director of Prevention in the Office of Child Safety, with some of the mechanics of this conversion. Both she and I are available in Groupwise for your comments. This is both an opportunity and a critical passage for employees on both sides of the equation. I would like to share with you some

of the things we know and some of the things we do not know about this conversion process.

First, we are not dismantling the CSAs. The legislation that created the CSAs will remain for the time being. We have just made a decision to bring the work of the CSAs in-house for a couple of compelling reasons – seamlessness and ownership. DCS is utilizing every opportunity to make the sole job of our staff to be permanency for children. Our history includes handoffs from intake workers to case workers, from caseworkers to adoption workers, from CSA workers to DCS workers, from home county case managers to residential case managers, and so forth. When most people's jobs were to take a child from one point in the system to another point in the system, children got stuck. With the merger of duties between CSA staff and DCS staff, the same worker will ultimately provide in-home services prior to custody, casework services during custody and follow-up services when permanency is achieved. Handoffs will still exist, but there will be fewer of them.

Now a word about ownership ... DCS regions and CSA offices have historically had good people who did not always agree. Regardless of who may have been right in the individual or collective arguments, the lines of responsibility were not clear and it was easy to feel powerless due to the perception that the "other department" held the cards. Now, DCS steps into ownership for the prevention services, management and expenditure of flex funds, and the outcomes delivered by our contracted providers of in-home services. In the future, it will all be us, and we will own the quality of the product entirely, for better or for worse. And what we truly own, we are empowered to fix.

DCS will make every attempt to bring over CSA employed staff who perform departmental work to a comparable job within DCS. In many cases, staff will be doing the work they have done in the past as they begin their new jobs. Over time, the work of the department and of the CSAs will grow closer together so that caseloads look similar and work looks the same. The DCS Practice Model says it this way: "As Regional management teams phase in the seamless system, case managers will begin to carry weighted, mixed caseloads. The DCS case manager will carry both custodial and non-custodial cases, and have integrated permanency responsibilities related to foster care and adoption" (*Commentary: Standard 5-200, p. 79*).

Regional administrators now face the task of forming one team from many teams and, in many cases, will be aided by the existing executive director, who will come to DCS as an integral part of in-home operations. Also, we will be looking at the use of space in each region, as the RAs form a plan with Tom Hutchinson and Jim Gordon about how to use our space to best serve the needs of children and families. It will be a massive conversion of existing employees, so we do plan to convert CSA operations at a staggered pace between July and December. Our objective is to complete all matters of transfer by the end of calendar year 2005.

We have some unresolved questions about the destination of the health units, the closing out of CSA accounts, and whether some of the CSAs may survive in a privatized form to

continue their work for the Department of Corrections or for TennCare. These questions will be addressed through the joint workgroups, which will include both CSA and DCS staff. We look forward to the suggestions many of you have that will ensure the smoothness of this transition for children and families.

## **Core Leadership**

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### **CORE Leadership Meeting Mary Beth Franklyn, Presiding February 1, 2005**

#### **Commissioner Update**

A two-day Child Protective Services training was held by satellite last Friday and Monday by Commissioner Miller, Denise Alexander and Jennifer Hamilton. The training included 107 employees from around the state. The consortium taped the training to ensure that regional staff and CLT members can view it. Tom Riche will be the point person for the regions to request a tape.

The CPS Central Office Regional Teams county assignments have been determined. The teams will consist of two members and they will facilitate a Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM) with CPS staff. Frank Mix will be providing CFTM training for the CPS regional team members and CLT staff. Mix is working on dates to schedule this training.

The Commissioner encouraged regions to do cross-training within the agency.

#### **Lunch and Learning**

The Commissioner announced that there would be a series on Friday afternoons called the "Lunch and Learning Series." The first installment is scheduled for February 11, with following sessions to be held every other week. Planned topics include strategies for interviewing children, sexual abuse, abuse and neglect, attachment, the relationship between the legal department and Child Protective Services and other issues.

Every region will be required to send 5 people, and they are responsible for disseminating that information back to the region.

#### **Governor's State of the State Address**

The most significant piece of the Governor's speech concerning DCS was his mention of Commissioner Miller, who was the only commissioner mentioned by name in the address. The Governor pledged support to DCS by improving salaries and adding CPS workers.

## **Targeted Juvenile Justice Compliance**

Brenda B. Bell presented a handout on the John Doe Agreed Order, which in 1996 provided guidelines for treating mentally retarded (MR) juveniles who are confined or may be confined in institutions. The class was expanded to all MR juveniles who have been or will be committed to the Department of Corrections (DOC) by juvenile court.

The John Doe Agreed Order identified 10 elements. They include the following:

- 1 Individualized Evaluation Classification, and Program Planning
2. Programs of Behavior Management
3. Disciplinary Sanctions
4. Grievance Procedure
5. Medical and Health Care Services
6. Appropriate Living Conditions
7. Student Orientation
8. Staffing
9. Educational Programming
10. System of Implementation and Monitoring

Steve Hornsby, Ken Steverson, Audrey Corder, Dezanne Russell and Brenda Bell have been involved in a Doe workgroup meeting for four months, and have examined DOC and Department of Youth Development policies and DCS policies. The group is working to ensure interagency coordination.



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***The best way to make children good is to make them happy.*** –Oscar Wilde

